

# Facets

*for women*

December 2007



## Peacemakers

Local women show how we can make a better world

### Table grace

This guide to place settings helps you avoid hostess panic

### New toys, old memories

Cherished fur coats become teddy bears for a new generation

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WONDERED WHAT A  
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DO FOR YOU?

MARY DID...

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# hue & cry

## Creating harmony



There was a span of time in my family — oh, perhaps a decade or so — when a day of peace between my sister and me was cause for celebration.

My mother thought that one blessing about having girls was she wouldn't have to worry about us fighting as brothers might. Was she ever wrong. I don't remember exactly what Mari, 15 months my elder, and I fought about most of the time, and there were no lasting injuries. But we sometimes had five spats a day, which could escalate to throwing handy objects or hair-pulling. In one infamous (and now hilarious) incident, after my mother had set us to work painting on an irritably hot summer day, Mari swiped my ponytail with bright blue paint.

There was one situation, however, when my sister and I rarely squabbled, and that was when we were singing together. My sister is blessed with a wonderful singing voice; mine is not as solo-worthy, but our voices blend together beautifully. Starting in late grade school, we would work on learning pop songs with nice harmonies. Mari would work out the alto part on the piano for me, and after I had practiced it for a while, she would join in with the soprano line. Eventually we performed at a number of events. My favorite "performance," however, was singing with my sister in church on Sunday mornings.

My sister and I didn't really stop our quarreling

**Definition:** Any loud clamor or protest intended to incite others to action.

until she went off to college. But then, when she came home on weekends, we didn't argue and instead stayed up talking into the wee hours. I realized I missed those Sunday-morning harmonizing sessions on the weekends she did not come home. And, as the holidays approached, I especially realized how just now nice it was to sit next to her in church on Christmas Eve and sing "Silent Night" in harmony.

Many of you know how enchanting this ritual is: The church is darkened before the carol begins, save for the light of one candle. That light is shared as its flame is passed from one candle to another, until the whole church glows in flickering warmth. Then the music begins, a melody that most everyone knows, with words about a night when all was calm and bright and an infant brought redeeming grace.

As those words are sung, and in the candlelit silence that follows, there's a magical moment when it's possible to believe that the "heavenly peace" we wish for might just be possible. For that moment, all our squabbles fade away, and we are all just a room full of people sharing our voices and our little flicker of a common flame, each of us making the holiday just a little bit brighter.

May all of you find a moment of "heavenly peace" this December; may you savor it when it arrives; and may you carry the optimism of that moment with you in the year to come.

—Heidi Marttila-Losure, Facets editor

### A new look

You may notice a change in this issue of Facets: The cover of the magazine has stayed the same, but the inside pages are printed on high-bright newsprint instead of the glossy paper. Some inside pages also are black and white.

This is primarily a budget-based decision. There are, however, two positive side effects: This paper is more environmentally friendly, and the cost of advertising has been reduced, meaning businesses that had until now been "priced out" of Facets may now be able to afford to get their message out to Facets readers.

One thing that has not changed is the quality of Facets' editorial content, which still features local women and provides them with information that's relevant to their lives.

Ideally, this change in paper won't dramatically affect your reading experience. It's possible, however, that we may have to iron out a few bugs as we adjust to our new format, and if we do, I hope you'll be patient as we adapt.

Thanks, loyal readers!



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**Cover photo:**

Working for peace has become the driving force in Sue Dinsdale's life since her son's experience in Iraq and her family's experience at home prompted her to become involved in the anti-war movement.

*See story on page 6*

Photo by Small Dog Productions/232-3203

**Questions or comments?**

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Ginger Johnson

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Facet > 1. One of the flat surfaces cut on a gemstone.  
2. The particular angle from which something is considered.



# Trainers' tips

By DEBRA ATKINSON

Even the professionals find it sometimes difficult to get their exercise done.

Oh, they do it. They aren't likely to waffle completely, by the very nature of the profession they've chosen and the personalities they have. But they aren't above affirmations, incentives and reminders when the chill in the air makes three-cheese lasagna more appealing than a three-mile run. Below you'll find 10 tips from folks who make every day about exercise and fitness.



## Trainers' "high priority" workout staples:

**1** I love the Bosu (an inflated blue hemisphere, like half a ball, on a rigid platform). Being able to take an exercise like a standing cable row and add more challenge to it by balancing on the Bosu is a great way to double your "bang for your buck" because you can isolate a muscle group and add core work at the same time.

— Jeremy Marshall,  
personal trainer

**2** Running with my kids (2 ½ and 10 months old) in a double stroller has become one of my favorite workouts. Not only is pushing the stroller (especially against the wind) a good workout, but it's fun to chat with my daughter about the various things (canoes, bikes, dogs) we see around Ada Haden Park.

— Mandy McGuire,  
group fitness director

**3** I find a bench or step high enough so that when I put my foot on it, my leg is at about a 90-degree angle. I step up, leading with the same foot 10-12 repetitions, then repeat with the other leg. To increase the difficulty, I'll hold 8- to 10-pound weights. This exercise increases my heart rate, so it benefits my cardiovascular system and strengthens my leg muscles at the same time.

— Jody Gatewood,  
registered dietitian and  
personal trainer

**4** I always include in my workouts leg squats, multiplanar lunges and rows with shoulder retractions. For my core, I include a rotational exercise like cable twists and some variation of a plank. If I have the time, I run on the treadmill or elliptical for 15 to 20 minutes, then do weights, and I always stretch at the end. Then I have to have my chocolate milk!

— Tami Meyer,  
named Story County's  
Best Trainer of the Year

**5** I like to end each workout, whether cardio or strength training or both, by doing at least a one-minute "hover" or plank. It's a simple way to push myself a bit more when the body's good and fatigued. And it feels so good to stretch afterward.

— Bea Smith,  
personal trainer

## Trainers' tips for when all else fails:

**6** To keep myself motivated doing cardio, I like to find a good book and only read it when I'm doing cardio. Once I really get into the book I find myself doing longer and longer cardio workouts in order to read more of the book.

— Jeremy Marshall

**7** My best motivator is knowing how good I feel after a workout versus how cheated I feel if I skip one. My body is so in tune to working out that if I skip, my brain and my body are sluggish.

— Mandy McGuire

**8** When not motivated to do my normal exercise routine, I change it up. Rather than run for 30 minutes, I might do cycling or swimming. I also might go for a walk (I may start running after a while). Or I shake it up and do some resistance training. I tell myself that doing something is better than nothing, even if it isn't as intense as I normally do.

— Jody Gatewood

**9** I am an athlete, and that's all I know to be. More importantly, I have family history of cancer and diabetes, so I will do whatever I can to prevent me from getting either of those. Exercise is a big stress reliever for me; it allows me to think through things and gives me alone time so I can talk to God. It makes me feel good, period.

— Tami Meyer

**10** I think goal setting is really important. I keep a journal or calendar, and I set my goal with a date attached and a reward for when I achieve it. I mark on the calendar when I've worked on my goal and then reward myself when I attain it. I keep goals very attainable, with short-term goals leading into long-term goals. I make the reward something I'll really work for, but it can be simple, like a new pair of workout socks or a massage. Having reminders of my reward is helpful, too, like a picture of a new pair of tennis shoes in my day planner, or a picture of a fit woman working out on my mirror.

— Bea Smith

Wrap these tips up for winter fitness stick-to-itiveness for yourself, or package them with a yoga mat, a few training sessions, or a new heart-rate monitor for a loved one who might need a little help from you to be inspired again!



Debra Atkinson is a personal trainer at Ames Racquet and Fitness Center. She can be reached at [debra\\_atkinson@msn.com](mailto:debra_atkinson@msn.com).

# Peacemakers

**Seven women share their views on creating a more peaceful world**

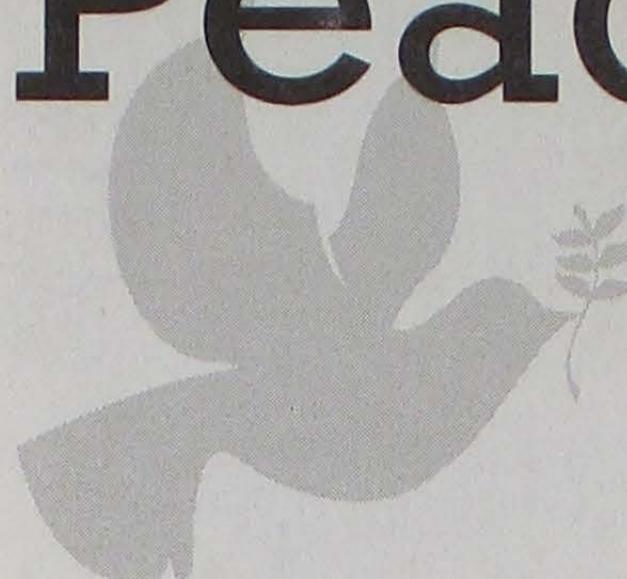
**P**eace on Earth.' As we send out our holiday greetings this December, many of the cards we mail will express our wishes for peace — a gift we want for ourselves, as well as our neighbors and our world.

Our world today is far from peaceful, however. We are a nation at war; soldiers are fighting in our name in Iraq and Afghanistan. On our own soil, we fight one another, in both subtle and overt ways, on our streets and in our homes.

How do we get beyond our greeting-card wishes and longings for peace and take steps toward creating a peaceful world?

One way to begin might be to examine the paths these local women are walking — journeys that have taken them to far-flung places as well as kept them close to home, and that have brought them to interact more peacefully with others as well as to find more peace within themselves. These women don't have final answers, but their journeys toward peace may well convince us to take some steps of our own.

— Heidi Marttila-Losure, *Facets editor*



**SUE DINSDALE** | Iowa field director of Americans Against Escalation in Iraq

"I am not an in-your-face whacko. I am just a mom who happens to be passionate about ending the war because it has touched my life. My son Jesse served two tours of duty in Iraq. He was stationed on the Iraq/Kuwait border during the initial invasion.

"As a family, it was horrific. We tried to go about our lives, but it is a difficult thing to do. My daughter was in high school, and I remember she felt guilty having fun when she thought about where her brother was and what he was going through. Our youngest son was so worried about his brother he would have trouble concentrating in school. Here in Iowa it was so isolating because we knew so few people who were going through what we were. We were just walking around in a fog.

"When he finally made it home, I just threw my arms around him, and I never wanted to let him go. But within six weeks of returning home, we found out he was going to be deployed again. It was so much harder the second time because we knew what to expect.

"In this war so much of the burden is being put on so few people. During Vietnam, when my husband served, everyone was affected in some way. But this war is not in every neighborhood. It's not in every home. People aren't out in the streets about this because they don't see the real human costs of this war. Some people don't even know we are at war.

"I finally just decided I needed to do something. I began working with groups like Time for Peace and the Alliance for Global Justice. I was just doing my little bit.

"Then Anna Nicole Smith died, and everything changed. I was sitting at my desk at the Y, and a breaking news alert flashed on my computer screen. My heart sank. I thought it would be about some development in the war, and I was worried that my son could be recalled, but it wasn't. Thousands of people have died over there, and here we are getting a news alert that this pseudo-celebrity is dead! I was so upset I had to leave my office. I attended a peace meeting that night and went on a tirade. The folks there asked if I would speak at an upcoming rally, and everything just snowballed from there.

"I was asked to go to Washington to speak with Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid. It was just three moms and two veterans in a room sharing our stories while they listened. Afterward, I had the opportunity to speak at a press conference surround-



Sue Dinsdale of Huxley has taken part in many rallies since she became active in the anti-war movement.

ed by cameras and a sea of reporters. People ask if I was nervous, but I really wasn't. I believe so much in ending this war that I just spoke from my heart. I have been working night and day ever since. I resigned my position at the Y. I have to devote myself to this full-time. People are dying. I feel I have to do something.

"Right now I am leading a campaign to convince our congressional representatives here in Iowa to listen to their constituents and bring an end to the war. We started this summer, holding rallies, writing letters and signing up volunteers. 'Iraq Summer' was part of a nationwide grassroots effort organized by Americans Against Escalation in Iraq, and it took off. We met many people all across Iowa who believe we need to bring the troops home from Iraq."

"I continue to travel around the state and speak out because for peace to happen, we need to talk. We need to communicate. We need to understand we are all part of one world. I am not an expert in foreign policy, but I know there are really smart people in Washington who can figure this out. A total pull-out tomorrow may not be feasible, but

there has got to be a more responsible way to do things. There has got to be a better way."

"Pressure your elected officials, pray, make sure people understand what is happening, write a letter to your representative, make a phone call. Do it for my son; do it for all the sons and daughters who are over in Iraq. If everybody did just one thing, it could make such a difference."

"I am the last person on earth who would show disrespect for a soldier or a soldier's family. My father was in the Army and came home one week after my first birthday. My step-father was a medic in Vietnam. My husband enlisted during the Vietnam War, and my son followed in his footsteps. The warriors have done nothing wrong. This is about a war that needs to end."

"I talked to a soldier the other day who told me they sit around in their tents at night and wonder why nobody cares, why nobody is fighting to bring them home."

"We care! We are giving them a voice. Knowing that keeps me going every day."

— Interview by Susan Vernon

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## BROOK McPherson | Patrol officer with the Ames Police Department

"Usually I'm called a patrol officer, not a peace officer. That title was switched for the most part before I entered law enforcement. But our main objective is to keep the peace and help make the community a good place to live for the citizens. That's probably how the title 'peace officer' came about. Some of the forms we fill in at work still say 'peace officer.' 'Peace officer' sounds less aggressive, more like a service, and that's what we're about, a service to the community."

"It may sound cheesy, but what it would take for peace on earth is for people to get along? I'd say it would mean living a true lifestyle, knowing right from wrong and choosing to do the right thing. If there were peace on earth, I wouldn't have a job. How I keep peace for myself is to find quiet time and time with my family. It's time I definitely need in this career. The tough times I see people in help me put my own personal life in perspective."

"When it comes to peace in families, the children we deal with are often going through some very conflicting times and have bad influences in their lives. Some of those influences can come from outside the family. Lots of parents both work more than 40 hours a week, so some kids turn to those other influences. Parents could help minimize that by being more involved with

their kids — asking who they're with, where they're going and taking more time with their kids.

"To build peace in the community, I'd like to see an increase in proactive enforcement — more officers so we can be more proactive than reactive. Also, we are good at this, but can always improve in setting up response teams efficiently with the resources and staff we do have. Ames is a pretty safe community, but there have been more serious crimes in the past year here.

"In order to help keep Ames peaceful, we need good community relations. We need citizens comfortable talking to law enforcement and calling us when they see something that doesn't seem right. Sometimes citizens may be scared to call or may think their concerns aren't taken seriously because they don't see the

response we make. They don't always know the steps we take to follow up on calls, but we definitely do respond."

"People can also take some precautions to help against crime. I grew up in a community of only about 1,200 people, but we got in the habit of locking our car and house doors. I'm glad people feel so safe in Ames, but citizens could help deter theft by simply locking their doors. Sometimes that's all it takes. Informal neighborhood watch programs are helpful, too."

"It would be good for people to know that even though patrol officers wear a uniform, we are just like any other citizen. We live in this community, and we want what they want: a peaceful community and lifestyle. I'd say, call us. We want to make a difference. That is our job."

— Interviewed by Linda Voit



Brook McPherson says good community relations are key to keeping the peace in Ames.

Photo by Amy Vinchattle

## Rev. HEATHER Withers | Minister at Unity Church, Ames

"Growing up in England during World War II, I was always interested in peace. I love harmony and seeing people's lives blossom. For me, that happens best when the person is at peace and in a supportive environment. I'm always encouraged when people find inner peace and share it with family and friends, in their work place and the world. For, ideally, I think we are all bridge builders for peace."

*Photo by Amy Vinchattle*



Rev. Heather Withers says we need to work on communicating like giraffes — animals with large hearts who see things from the highest perspective.

"To be a bridge builder, we need a peaceful heart. We must be willing to look deeply within ourselves and see our own prejudices, fears, judgments, angers and hurts and be willing to change. This may require us to reflect on our interactions daily and to reconcile with others where we have been less than loving."

"This is not easy. Most of us have learned to talk 'jackal,' using critical, judgmental communication that separates us. Instead, Marshall Rosenberg, who wrote 'Non-Violent Communication,' suggests we need to talk 'giraffe,' the animal who has the largest heart and who sees things from the highest perspective. Giraffe is a language of the heart where a person observes what's happening in an interaction and takes responsibility for how they feel about it. They respond in a compassionate, non-judgmental way, by making requests rather than demands. Marshall has found this to

be very successful between individuals, in families and even in highly charged situations, like gang warfare and international incidents.

"Those who are truly peaceful, like Jesus, the Buddha, the Dalai Lama, speak giraffe fluently. They don't distinguish between friend and enemy. This unconditional love is what will lift us up to peace because it is stronger than anything else. Centered in their own calm nature, peacemakers can stand in the world and not let outer things affect their inner peace. Rather than fight or flight, they face conflict and opposition with a third response that loves the other without necessarily accepting the other's behavior."

"This response is at the heart of all major religions that honor love, peace and their version of the Golden Rule. We have found it particularly moving in inter-faith services for peace when a congregational

song in Hebrew is followed by a prayer in Arabic for peace among individuals and nations. This is echoed in Hindu, Buddhist, Bahá'í, Native American, Unitarian-Universalist and Christian faith communities.

"I believe that peace on earth is going to take enough of us affirming and praying for a peaceful world, acting peacefully and holding the vision. I believe it's possible to have peace on earth if we approach it from a spiritual point of view, seeing the highest and best in human beings and working in all areas for a world that works for everyone. Each conscious step toward peace makes us peacemakers in our own environment. In addition, if we direct our resource, including dollars, to peace, peacemaking and economic opportunity, we become bridge builders to world peace."

*— Interviewed by Linda Voit*



Photo by Small Dog Productions/232-3203

Sue Stanton says peace is not wimpy, and it is not passive — it takes work.

## **SUE STANTON** | International journalist, based in Ames

**"People in the Middle East, in particular Arab Christians, are the ones who taught me what peace really is."**

**"Arab Christians live in a region of the world constantly at war, yet they constantly talk of peace. It is a position of faith. I have never met more optimistic people. They keep families and homes together by peaceful means."**

"I've been to Jordan three times and have been blessed to experience the welcoming hearts of the Jordanian people. For a while I've been asking what the consequences and effects of the Iraqi war are going to be on the people of Jordan, whose border is just one hour from Baghdad. Jordan is now home to more than 1 million refugees, and 300,000 are under 10 years old."

"I've known Father Nabil Haddad for years. He runs a school for Iraqi refugee children in Amman, Jordan. After inviting

him to speak at Iowa State University about the Christian presence in the holy land, I asked what he needed most, and he said, 'help for the mothers of the children to be self-sufficient.' They don't want a handout. They lost a lot in the war, but not their dignity or self-respect."

"Based on the identified need for self-sufficiency, the women are working on a business venture. They plan to make food in their own tradition, Iraqi cooking, to be sold to local vendors. They asked me to help raise funds for the project. They

need a kitchen. They already have the building, part of the school. This kitchen will make the school more of a community center. There is something inherently beautiful about a group of women talking over food with kids running around the table, laughing and talking."

We need \$30,000 to build the kitchen, buy the supplies and pay five to 20 moms' salaries for the first year.

"Refugees are traumatized and grow skeptical of promises of help. As a sign of commitment to the women, Father Haddad took \$500 of his own money and bought a bag of beans that sits in the corner of the room that will be the kitchen. Organized locally in Amman, Jordan, people with peaceful intent invited me to join in an effort of creating peace. It's my privilege to do that."

"As a journalist, words are important to me. The word 'peace' has been thought of as weak and passive. We need, on an inner level, to understand that to be peaceful is not a weakness. If anything, anger is easier. Anger has its place in small doses, but peace is something we need to work on all the time. If we refuse to go into realms of hatred and bigotry — that in itself is being peaceful. Peace is strong, not wimpy. It does not abdicate responsibility. It's not passive. It takes work. Arab Christians are struggling and working hard to build peace inch by inch. They are reaching across the world to ask for our help. It is achievable, and this kitchen will provide resources for achieving peace. That's a great return on \$30,000."

"Peace means building one piece at a time, and what we build, we work hard to preserve. When we understand the ways of peace, we'll embrace the challenge of it. We should not wait for the end of the war to build peace. We can start now!"

— Interview by Linda Voit

### **Want to help?**

Plans call for building to begin in January. Half of the money is needed to start the project. If you'd like to help support the Iraqi Women's Project, send a check to St. Cecilia Church, 2900 Hoover Ave, Ames, IA 50010. Make the check out to St. Cecilia Church with "Iraqi Women's Project" in the memo line.

## LORI Jenks | Preschool teacher at St. Paul Lutheran Preschool

"I teach 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds at St. Paul Lutheran Preschool. It is amazing to have a job where I can watch children learn and grow so much over the course of a single year."

"The first month of school is always a little chaotic. Everything is new to the children. For some, it is their first experience away from Mom. For 3-year-olds, everything is new. They don't know how to react. We have children who don't know how to share, unkind words, children not understanding one another. And they always want to have what someone else is playing with."

"But after the routine and order is set, things calm down. Children thrive on routine and order. They appreciate rules and limits. It makes them feel safe."

"Some adults rebel against societal order and structure and get themselves into trouble. Others don't succeed in life because they don't use the talents God gives them or they use them in the wrong way. Ultimately to succeed in life the motive for doing right has to come from inside you, and some people don't have that motive."

"We try to instill that motive in children. We try to teach them about understanding other people and loving them. We all have choices every day — how we talk to the clerk at the store or the person at

McDonald's, how we treat the library worker — it all snowballs into an attitude of niceness, appreciation and caring that makes the world a more peaceful place."

"We do many service projects at St. Paul Lutheran Preschool. Just in September we had a trike-a-thon for St. Jude's Research Hospital. They were so excited to help children who were sick. One little boy had a hard time sleeping the night before because he was so excited. The children raised over \$1,600. The preschoolers also have made blankets for the youth at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, prepared Christmas boxes for Operation Christmas Child, and collected items for the Orphan Train and for our local food pantry."

"We do these projects to help the

children learn to share God's love with others in need. What we have is not just for our benefit but for sharing. The preschoolers are a living example of this."

"I do not believe there will ever be true peace here on Earth, but my faith allows me to feel at peace. I am lucky to be able to share that with children along with the lessons of forgiveness, kindness, sharing love, and striving to lead a better life."

"The children learn and grow so much each year, but it is important to remember children learn more from parents than they will ever learn at school. Everything comes from family, and giving children a secure base at home makes all the difference."

— Interviewed by Susan Vernon



Lori Jenks says part of her job is helping children to understand one another.



Photo by Amy Vinchattle

## SUE Stidwell | Licensed mental health counselor, anger management instructor and mediator for Mediation Resources of Central Iowa

**"I was drawn to mediation after testifying in 30 child custody disputes.**

**"The intensity of conflict there is so high, and when divorces involve high conflict, the children involved are at high risk of developing emotional problems. I knew I wanted to do something to reduce the conflict and the lasting wounds that contested custody can create.**

"My business partners, Sharon Drake and Bob Bourne, are former mediators for the Center for Creative Justice, which recently discontinued mediations. We all help people navigate through difficulties with less conflict. We don't make judgments, express opinions, or give legal advice. The parties involved control the outcome; reaching agreement is voluntary. Sometimes we just plant a seed and people come back later to work on the issues.

"To work out conflict, first both must be willing to explore working it out. This requires awareness and skill-building. There are two very strong predictors of success in a relationship: First, the individuals possess empathy, and second, they possess skills to manage conflict. A professional mediator allows a couple to improve both to bring themselves and their children through such a life-changing situation as divorce.

"One thing people can do to create peace in their relationships is to remember that often what feels like anger can be other emotions, like fear, hopelessness, or emotional pain. So if they can tap into that when they feel angry, they can stop themselves long enough to think. For example, when a parent finds his child who was lost at a mall, instead of saying angrily,

Photo by Nirmalendu Majumdar



Sue Stidwell suggests considering whether another emotion, such as fear, helplessness or emotional pain, is behind what we call anger.

'Where were you?' the parent could say what he really felt: 'I was scared to death something happened to you!' Instead of tearing the little one down, the parent reinforces his concern. We learn to think our responses rather than just react.

"Also, Dr. Patricia Love suggests in her book 'The Truth About Love' that we stop and ask some questions when we are in conflict. Ask yourself, 'What does my mate need? What do I need? What does the family need?' This may create a different perception of the conflict and thus a different outcome.

"Our work as mediators affects peace in the community. We work with schools, families, businesses, and as adjuncts to attorneys. Our goal is to be neutral guides in very emotional, conflictual situations, and to reduce conflict and its aftermath.

"Bringing about peace on earth is so multifaceted, both at home and abroad.

Disruptions to peace, such as new crime in Ames, need to be quickly addressed. Gun control and war support are divisive issues. What it comes down to is we each have to do our part because the big picture is often too overwhelming. We each have to do our part within our own families, with our own kids, in our own jobs, and in our own communities. We need to use self-control when arguments start and be responsible for our part of the conflict, rather than blaming and shaming. We term that 'being accountable' in anger management classes. We need to limit the violence our children view and hear. And it's important to vote and support causes that are peaceful. I believe spirituality, and developing your own, is a big part of finding that peace within to survive a conflictual world."

— Interviewed by Linda Voit

## BARBARA Pleasants | Adjunct assistant professor at Iowa State University

**"I am a teacher at Iowa State in the Department of Ecology, Evolution and Organismal Biology. I have not been affected by the struggle for peace in a personal sense as much as an academic sense. I teach a course on the Holocaust, and I hope students can relate that history to the modern world and the issues facing us today."**

"After World War II, people wondered how something so horrible could happen. They said we need to do something; we should learn from this. Apparently, we didn't. History and current events tell us we are not doing better. Ethnic rivalries continually erupt throughout the world.

"I think the biggest hindrance to peace is extreme nationalism. The leaders of countries feel they have all the answers, and they feel they have the right to impose their system, their way of doing things on the world or on neighboring countries. I think that although people as individuals are often very well-intentioned and mean the best, groups do a lot of damage because we tend to approach the world as us versus them.

"It is part of our nature. From our

beginning, people lived in small groups. There was survival value in group identity. We have to get beyond that to change things, and I am not optimistic. The world is full of people who want power, play on the sentiments of their people and use their power in dangerous ways.

"The civil rights movement did make a difference in terms of what is happening within our country. The society my students grew up in is different from the society my parents grew up in. Blatant racism, blatant anti-Semitism are not as acceptable anymore. Maybe I am being overly optimistic because I think now we have overt racism against the Hispanic population, prejudice against immigrants. I will just say many groups are doing better in this country than they were two

generations ago.

"Locally, I think we are very fortunate to be a part of a university community. My children had all sorts of friends in school when they were children. I think when you are exposed to people from different backgrounds it makes all the difference.

"As individuals, we can't fix the world's problems, but we can deal with how we each interact with other people. We can be intolerant of intolerance when we see it and reach out to other people when opportunities present themselves. That is what I hope students take away from my course on the Holocaust. I hope they will speak up when they hear prejudiced or biased remarks. Silence by a population allows terrible things to happen.

"I still have other concerns for the world. The issues of economic disparity and educational disparity nationwide and worldwide need to be addressed. And I have many environmental concerns for us, our planet and other species. We have to give ethical consideration to everything. We cannot afford to be indifferent."

—interview by Susan Vernon



Barbara Pleasants hopes her students will be moved to speak up when they hear prejudiced or biased remarks.

Photo by Amy Vinchattle

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"Fair and Colder" by American Artist Ellison Hoover (1888-1955), brings to mind holiday adventures blanketed in white. This diminutive 1930's glittery paper mache snowman candy container originally came with a belly full of tiny treats.



Enjoy exploring the Octagon Center for the Arts' current exhibits on display now through January 6. Catherine Jones-Davies showcases her expressive art through colors, shapes and feelings in the Main Gallery. In Sweeney Gallery David Melby's Exhibit Led by Wandering Light highlights photography and painting as visual metaphors. For more information visit [www.octagonarts.org](http://www.octagonarts.org).



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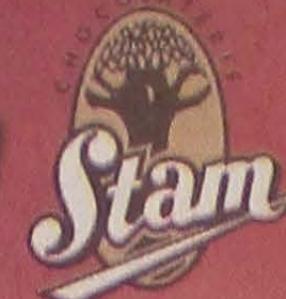
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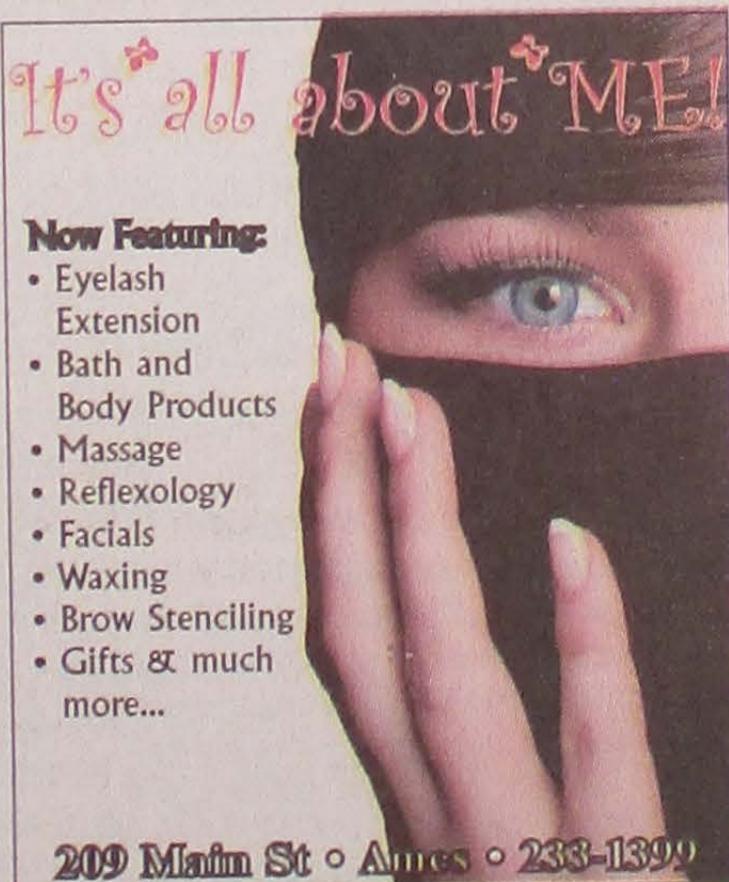
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# ALL SET

Adorn your holiday table with

*grace*

By ARDIE ROEHR

The holidays are a time for gathering around the table, and if you are like most hostesses, this is the time of year you dust off your good dishes, polish your nice silverware and iron your festive tablecloths to make those meals special. You might also be one of those hostesses who stares at the china and utensils with a moment of panic as you struggle to remember where the bread plate belongs.

Fear not! Here's a guide to ease that place-setting stress.

- Remember, forks go on the left and knives and spoons on the right. The dinner fork is closest to the plate, and the salad fork is to its left; on the right side of the plate, the blade of the knife is toward the plate, and to its right is the soup spoon.
- You might also consider having two knives on the right side. The one closest to the plate is used for the main course, and the next one out is used for salad. This is nice because when you are finished with the salad you can remove that knife as opposed to finding a place for it to sit until it is needed for the dinner course. (Once a piece of silver is used, it should never be placed on the tablecloth; it always needs a place to rest.) If there are not two knives, the knife used for salad can rest on top of the bread plate.
- Only set out utensils needed for the courses you will be serving. You can preset

dessert utensils above the dinner plate, including the teaspoon that is used for coffee or tea (it is usually only included when you serve a dessert).

• The bread plate goes on the left of the dinner plate and glasses on the right. Water glasses should be the only beverage filled before guests arrive.

• Napkins are usually set to the left of the forks and should be folded like a book to make it easy for guests to put them on their laps, folded in half with the fold away from them.

• Centerpieces should be no higher than eye level when people are seated so guests can easily visit with each other. Never place a flickering candle in front of anyone, as it can cause headaches. Unscented candles are best to use at the table. A centerpiece item could also be hung from the lighting above the table.

#### During the meal:

- Silverware is used starting from the outside and working toward the plate. Watch the host/hostess if you are unsure. Placing the knife and fork diagonally across the plate in a ten and four o'clock position signals you are finished, but this should only be done when the majority of the others are also finished. The host/hostess is the last one to finish, as he or she will wait until all the guests have finished.
- If you need to leave the table for any reason, place your napkin on the chair. When finished eating, place the napkin gently on the table.
- Food is always passed to the person on your right, and you never serve yourself first. Cut food one bite-size piece at a time and chew food 7 to 9 times before swallowing. This prevents upset stomach feelings during the meal. Salt and pepper are always passed together. Pinch or tear bite-size pieces of rolls before buttering and never put anything you have bitten into back on your plate. Finish eating the item.

Throughout the entire holiday season, remember the true reason we celebrate the holidays!

Ardie Roehr lives in Ames. She can be reached at [daroehr@msn.com](mailto:daroehr@msn.com).



[ FOOD BITES ]

# Celebrating LIGHT

Saffron buns add to  
Santa Lucia Day, Dec. 13

By HEIDI MARTTILA-LOSURE

**W**hen I was in Scandinavia for three weeks this fall, the coming of winter was hard to ignore. Each evening, dark came noticeably earlier; evening walks started to intrude on suppertime. By mid-December, walks have to be taken in the afternoon if one desires to walk by daylight. When we left from one of the many coffee gatherings we attended there, my relatives encouraged each other to stay positive and not let the gloom get to them in the dark times to come.

It's understandable, then, that Scandinavians want to celebrate the end of increasing darkness and the coming of longer days in mid-December. This festival honoring Santa Lucia, whose name means light, falls on Dec. 13 instead of the true winter solstice, a holdover from when Dec. 13 was considered the solstice on the Gregorian calendar in the 16th century. Santa Lucia is a third-century saint who some say helped Christians hide from Roman persecution by leading them to safety with her crown of candles.

In Sweden on Dec. 13, each church, school and town elects its own Lucia, who wears a white gown, red sash and a crown of candles and leads a procession of children wearing white. *Glögg* (spiced wine served warm with almonds and raisins) and *lussekatter* (saffron yeast buns with raisins that represent Lucia's eyes) are served during the celebration.

Try these tender buns if you'd like to have your own celebration of light this Santa Lucia Day!



## Lussekatter (Saffron Buns)

1 3/4 sticks butter, melted  
1 cup heavy cream  
.06 ounces saffron threads  
1 1/3 cups sugar, divided  
6 packages dry yeast (1/4 ounce each)

1 cup milk, warm  
1 teaspoon salt  
8 1/2 cups flour, divided  
1/3 cup water  
1/3 cup raisins

Combine melted butter and cream. Crush saffron with 1 tablespoon sugar in a mortar until very fine. Combine yeast, milk and 2 tablespoons sugar; let stand until mixture is foamy. Add butter mixture, saffron, 1 of the beaten eggs and salt to yeast mixture. Stir well. Add 6 cups flour; stir until a stiff dough forms. Turn mixture out onto a floured surface; knead about 10 minutes, adding flour 1/2 cup at a time, until dough is smooth and elastic. Place in a large bowl, cover with a damp cloth and let rise about 1 hour or until doubled in size.

Boil water and pour over raisins; let sit until raisins are plump. Preheat the oven to 475 degrees Fahrenheit. Knead dough and divide into 24 pieces. Shape each into an S shape. Place 2 raisins in the curves of the S. Let rise one hour. Brush with remaining beaten egg. Beat 8 to 10 minutes, or until browned. Makes 24 buns.

— Recipe from *Relish magazine*

# CALENDAR

**Through Dec. 13 – Toys for Tots:** New, unwrapped toys can be donated at the boxes located near Center Court and the customer service center.

**Through Dec. 16 – Holiday Giving Tree,** sponsored by Youth & Shelter Services, 1430 KASI Radio and North Grand Mall. Shoppers pick an ornament from the tree listing a specific need for a local family. Donations can be dropped at the mall customer service center. They will be wrapped and delivered to local families in need before Christmas.

**Through Dec. 24 – Gift wrap station** sponsored by American Business Women's Association (ABWA)/American Society of Woman Accountants (ASWA) at North Grand Mall. Shoppers may have their purchases wrapped for a small charge. Proceeds support scholarships for local students.

**Saturday, Dec. 1; Friday, Dec. 7; and Thursday, Dec. 20 – Pet Photos with Santa** at North Grand Mall, 7 to 9 p.m. Pet musts be on a leash or in a carrier.

**Sunday, Dec. 2 – "Music of the Spirit,"** a concert by the women's choral group Good Company, 7 p.m. at St. Andrews Lutheran Church, 209 Colorado Ave., Ames. Tickets are \$8 and are available at Gallery 319, 314 Main St., Ames, or at the door.

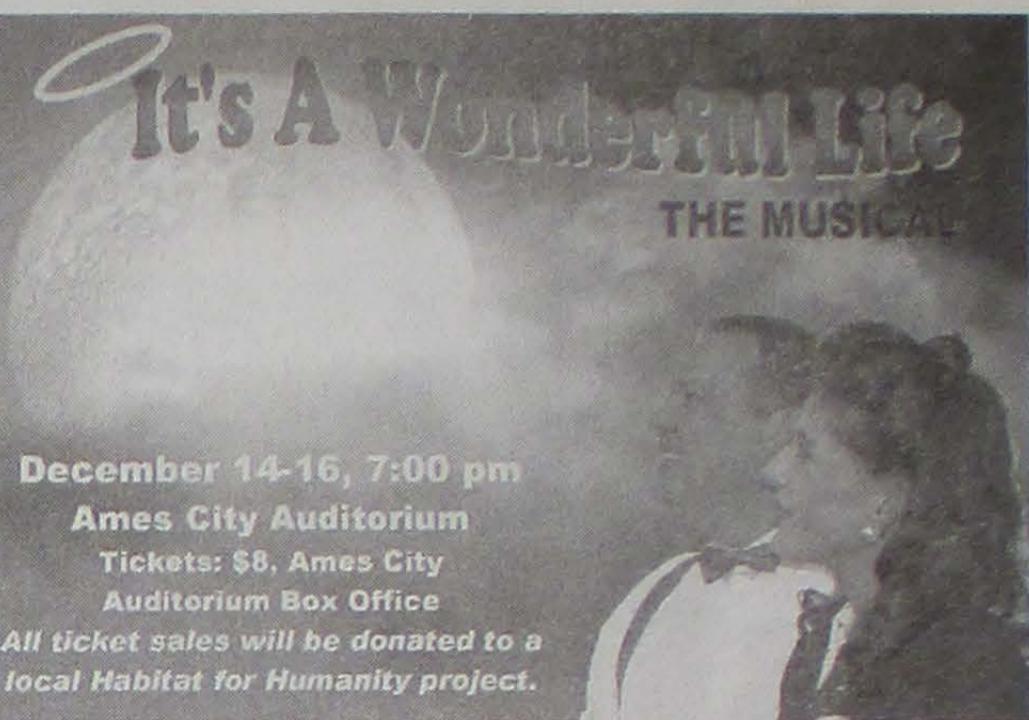
**Saturday, Dec. 8 – Breakfast with Santa** at North Grand Mall, 9 a.m. Free to children 10 and under, but they must be accompanied by an adult. Breakfast is available for those over 11 years old for \$5. Reservations must be made by Thursday, Dec. 6, by calling 232-3679 or e-mailing info.ngr@gkdevelopment.com. Children receive breakfast, crafts, story time, a special gift bag and a discount coupon for photos with Santa. Photos with Santa will be available for purchase.

**Fridays, Jan. 11 and 18; Saturdays, Jan. 12 and 19; and Sundays, Jan. 19 and 20 – "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,"** 7 p.m. Fridays and 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, at Ames City Auditorium, 515 Clark Ave. The Story Theater Company presents the magic of C.S. Lewis' Narnia. For tickets or more information, call 292-8530 or go to [www.storytheatercompany.org](http://www.storytheatercompany.org).

## A Christmas story staple

The movie that made Christmas really feel like Christmas for several generations of Americans comes to live on stage in Ames in December. "It's a Wonderful Life," a musical based on the 1946 film, will be performed at 7 p.m.

Friday through Sunday, Dec. 14 to 16, in Ames City Auditorium. The story shares a heart-warming message as George Bailey, Mary, Uncle Billy and that sly businessman Mr. Potter make their way through hard times, love and life in small-town Bedford Falls.



**December 14-16, 7:00 pm**

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**All ticket sales will be donated to a local Habitat for Humanity project.**



Photo by Amy Vinchattle

## Rebuilt home among those on annual home tour

The home of Bob and Susan Bartsch at 1310 Top O Hollow Road is one of the stops on the Altrusa International annual Holiday Home Tour on Dec. 1 and 2. After a fire that destroyed their home in February 2006, the Barsches rebuilt on the same lot. The new home features some details their old home did not have, but the porch where their family gathered for the holidays and where they displayed the grand Christmas tree they were known for in the neighborhood has been recreated in their new home.

The home tour will take place from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 1 and 2. Advance tickets are \$10 and are available at Mary Kay's Flowers and Gifts, Coe's, Evert's and Shoppes on Grand. Tickets are also available at any one of the homes on the tour for \$12. The event will benefit the Red Cross, ACCESS and Habitat for Humanity. The other homes on the tour are Ron and Linda Ries, 6184 North Fork Road; Margo Hattery, 3807 Hoover Ave.; Greg and Marion Brown, 5614 Thunder Road; Paul and Linda Livingston, 3108 Roxboro Dr.; Habitat for Humanity, 1508 Carroll Ave.

# The Ames Contracting Team Enhances Way of Life...



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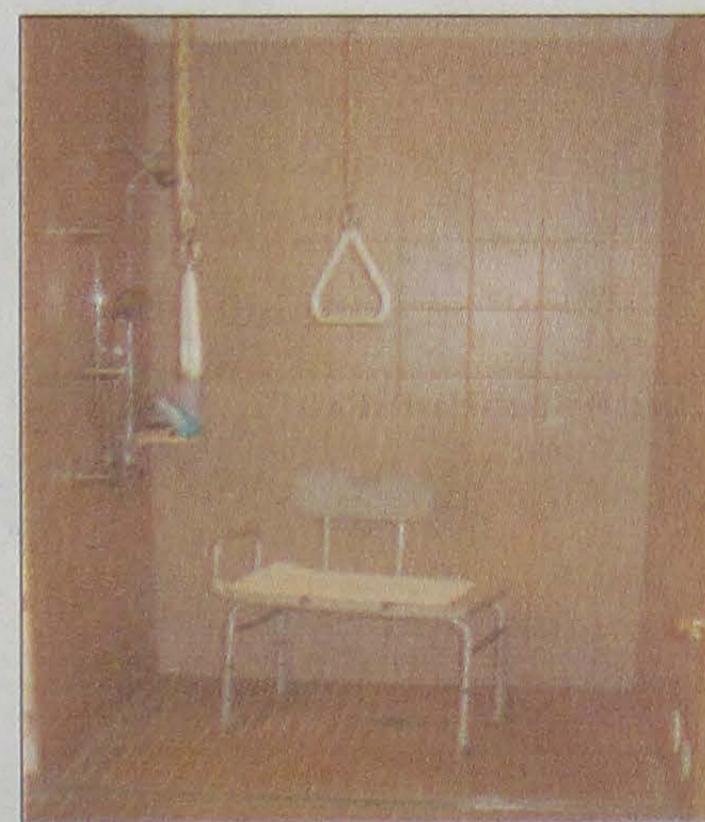
Jason Sorensen, a local Ames resident had the Ames Contracting Team make some improvements to his apartment. "If I hadn't had any of these things done, I wouldn't be able to live here. These improvements have enhanced my way of life and made me happier with more freedom. I feel like a normal productive member of society."

Jason moved into his apartment from a group home in Ames and now has a more independent lifestyle. "I love the Ames community, I think this is one of the best places to live in Iowa."

Jeannine Norem from Story County Community Life worked with the Ames Contracting Team to complete the project and get Jason moved in. "The Contracting Team was great to work with. The job was done in a timely manner, they really paid attention to the details. We will use the Ames Contracting Team for our projects in the future."



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[ THE HAPPY OLD LADY ]

# Making home a peaceful place

By NANCY LEWIS

**P**eace begins at home. I think that, if we want peace in the world, we need to begin at home. It's not easy to have a peaceful home in these days of tight schedules and high expectations. But we need to try.

When Ed and I were raising our children, in the 1960s and '70s, we tried to have a family meal every night. There are 11 years between our daughters and six years between our sons, so as the older two reached the age where they could discuss events of the day intelligently, we began having trouble with the younger two being unable to wait to speak. Finally we worked out a system. On the first night, Elizabeth, the older daughter, ate dinner with us, and Jon, the older son, ate with

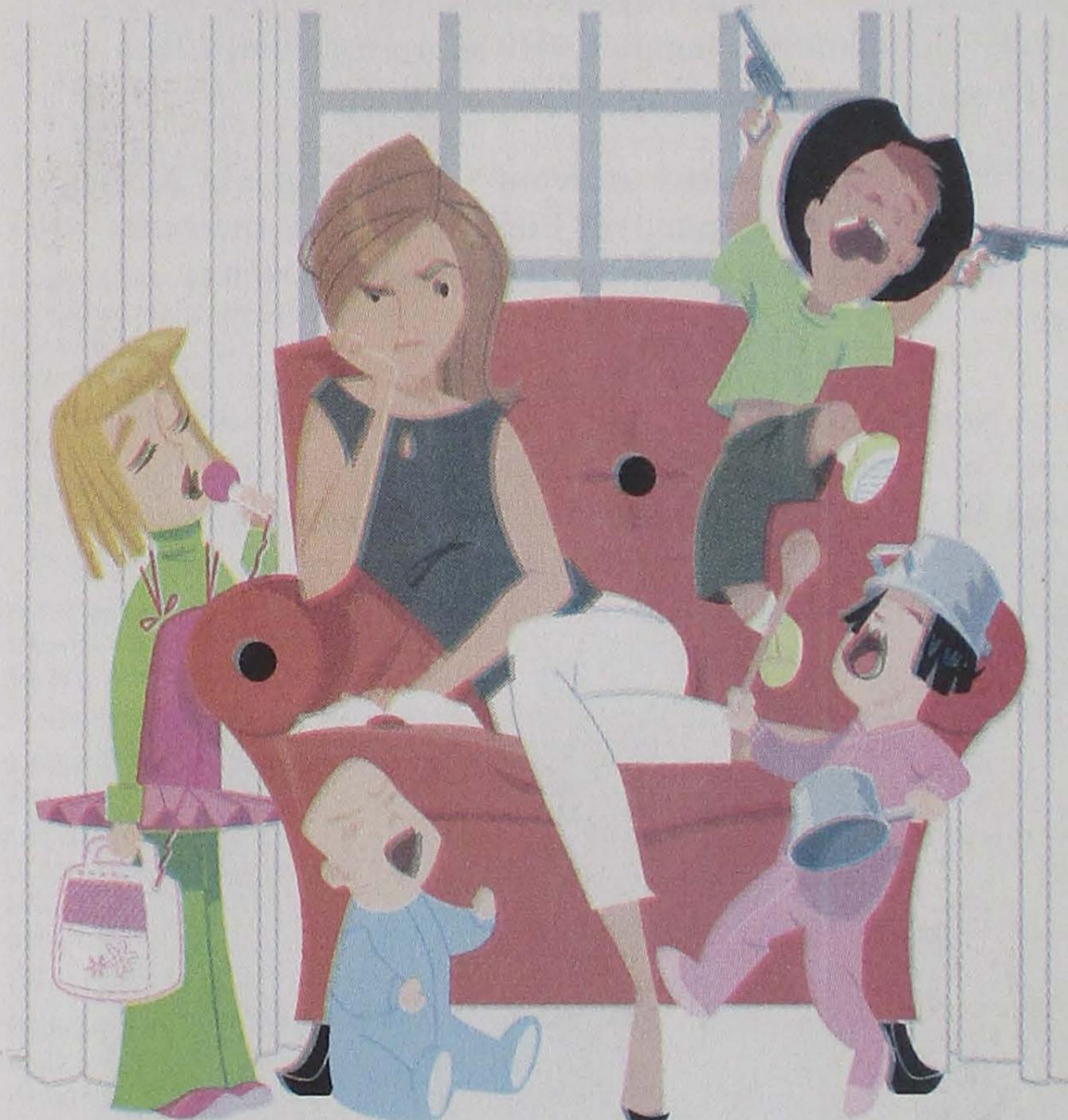
A certain amount of friction was inevitable, and when the arguments reached the physical point, I would say, "Separate rooms and quiet!"

his younger siblings. The next night Jon ate with us, and Liz with the little kids. That way each of the older ones got our full attention every other night, and we were able to keep up with what was happening in their lives. And the younger ones didn't have to listen to a lot of stuff that didn't interest them.

We worked out a similar adjustment for church services. One of the older kids took Ken, the younger son, to the other side of the worship area, while I sat with the other older one and Mynda, the younger daughter. That way Mynda and Ken weren't able to poke at each other.

I needed an afternoon rest in order to keep up with our four. Even after they were too old for naps, they went to their rooms for two hours in the afternoon so I could have some peace and quiet.

Our only TV was on the main floor of the house, and I didn't enjoy having it on very much. So only the children's favorite programs were watched. Of



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course, that was easier when we only had four channels! I was willing to play records for the kids, and they had a large collection. Music seemed to calm them rather than excite them, whereas the TV had the opposite effect.

A certain amount of friction was inevitable, and when the arguments reached the physical point, I would say, "Separate rooms and quiet!" The separation from each other was usually the only punishment needed. It wasn't long before whatever the fight had been about was not as important as being able to play together.

Christmas presented some major challenges. I soon realized that I could not do and make everything I wanted to. The big Christmas dinner was replaced by a prepare-ahead winter picnic. I no longer baked 15 batches of cookies, though I did find time for a few favorites. We quit trying to give holiday-time parties for our friends.

And we always opened our gifts one at a time, usually starting with the youngest. One of the older kids played Santa and handed the gifts out. Everyone paid attention to the unwrapping, and the receiver said "Thank you" before we went on to the next.

I'd like to say "Separate rooms and quiet!" to a lot of what is happening in our world today. May there be peace in our homes this December, even though we don't have peace in our world.



Nancy Lewis lives in Ames and can be reached at 233-2874 or [nswlewis@hotmail.com](mailto:nswlewis@hotmail.com).

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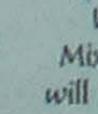
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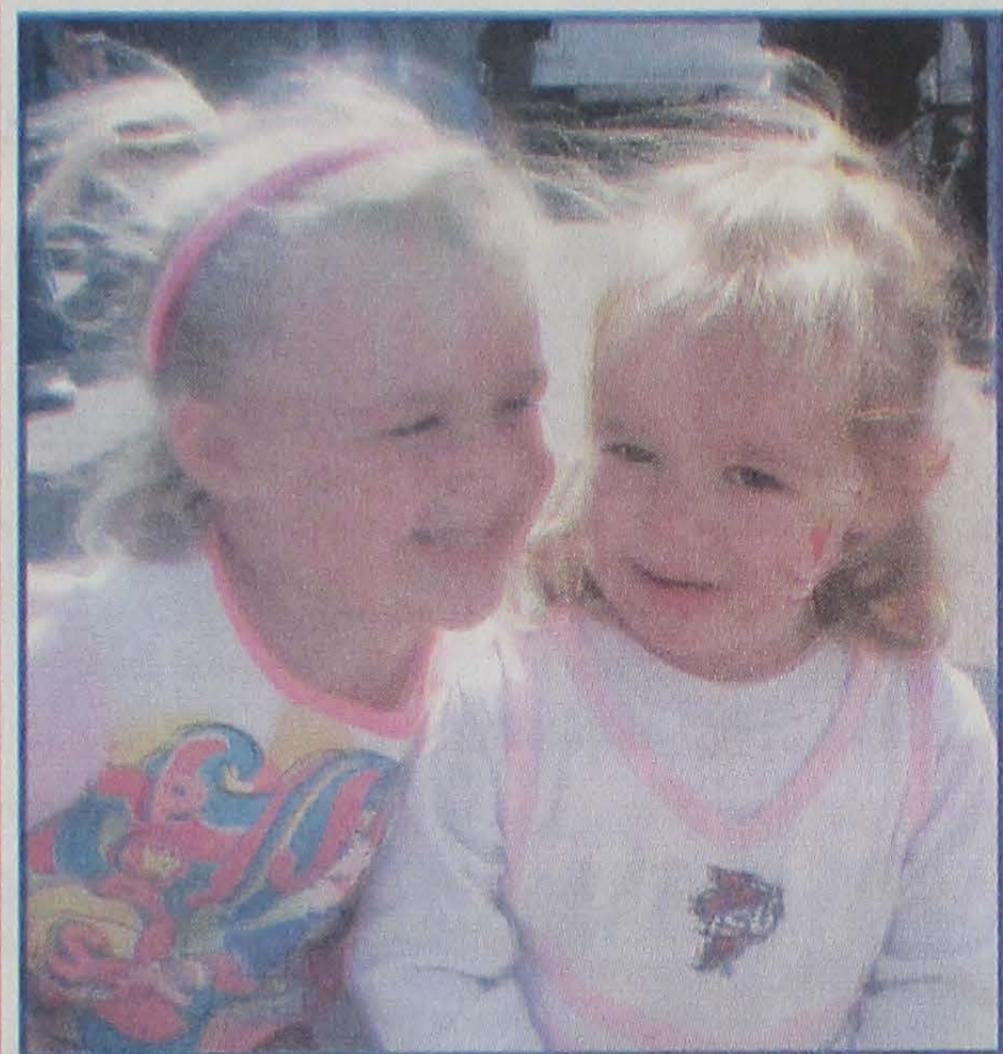


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Judy Roe, pictured far left, donated her new Janome machine she won in last year's Project Linus drawing to Shelbi Weeks. Roe read a story about Weeks making quilts for babies in the neo-natal unit at Mercy Hospital, using her mother's sewing machine. Weeks, pictured to the right of the machine, was very surprised and has many plans for her new Janome.

In 1998, Project Linus was started with the hope of benefitting children of need. The mission statement simply reads, "It is our mission to provide love, a sense of security, warmth to our children who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need of through the gifts of new, handmade blankets and afghans, lovingly created by volunteer "blanketeers."

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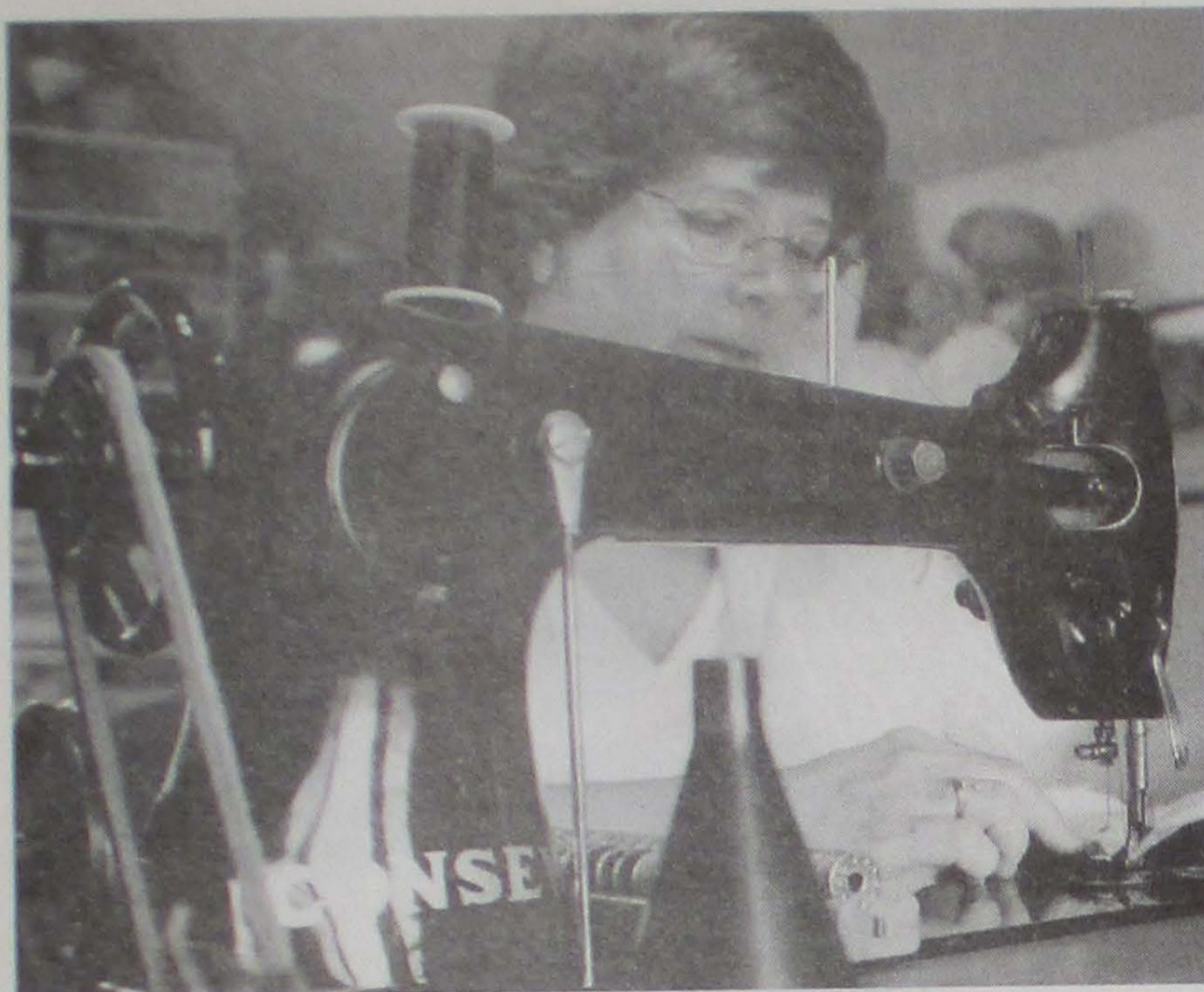
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Karla McDowell uses a Consew industrial sewing machine, which handles the heavy furs she fashions into bears.

# A teddy bear ARTIST

## Delivering smiles at Christmas — and all year long

By JOLENE PHILO

**D**uring a fit of housecleaning last summer, I forced myself to examine Grandma Fern's old fur coat. It's been in our family for as long as I can remember. Throughout my childhood and for many years beyond, it lived in the back of my parents' closet. For the last 16 years, our spare bedroom closet has been its home.

But the situation couldn't continue. The 60-year-old Alaskan seal coat was deteriorating. Unless something was done soon, I would have to throw it away. It was time to find the newspaper ad I'd tucked in my jewelry box a few years before and give Karla McDowell a call. A few minutes on the phone convinced me that she was the person to give Grandma's coat new life — as jointed teddy bears to be given to her great-grandchildren this Christmas.

### A love affair with bears

Karla McDowell loves teddy bears, as a quick look around her rural Adel home shows. The vintage teddy bears she and her husband, Jim, collect are displayed in every room, and her workshop holds baskets of tattered teddy bears waiting to be restored. But those bears are eclipsed by the jointed ones she creates out of old fur coats.

She's loved stuffed animals since childhood.

"My parents and my family tell me that my bed was covered with stuffed animals when I was a little girl," she said.

McDowell said grandmother taught her to sew when she was about 5, and she made her first bear as a Girl Scout project as a seventh-grader. She still has the pattern for that bear.

### From love to livelihood

But for many years that love lay dormant until she saw a bear made by a friend at a class in West Des Moines' Valley Junction. The friend loaned her the pattern, minus the instructions, and Karla used it to fashion her first bear.

"The first bear was awful," McDowell laughs. "I ended up burning that. I made changes to the pattern and developed my own pattern and instructions. And I've gone on from there."

When she first began sewing them, she used synthetic furs and sold the bears at craft fairs. "Every time I was at a craft sale I would have at least one lady come up and say, 'I have an old fur coat. Could you make a bear from that?'"

McDowell knew there were other people with fur coats, wondering what to do with them. By making those old coats into teddy bears, she could help families share the coats by giving them a new purpose. And so, 20 years ago, she launched her current business, Love Me Bears.

### A teddy bear artist

McDowell has turned her craft into an art.

"There's a huge difference between a craft and a piece of art," she says. "And I am considered a teddy bear artist because I take the project from design of the pattern to the finished product."

She is always mindful of the special memories the coats hold for her customers.

One woman told her she had saved her pennies to buy her coat when she was in her early 20s.

"Another woman said, 'This was my mother's coat. She used her mustering out money from the Army — she was an army nurse — to buy her coats,'" McDowell said. "So the coats meant so much to the ladies who wore them."

Because the coats are rich in sentimental value, McDowell makes the most of every coat entrusted to her: "The patterns are designed in such a way to make the most of the fur so my customer has enough to share with the whole family."

She takes this charge so seriously that she once fashioned 10 10-inch bears out of one fur coat.

#### Delivering smiles

McDowell's tools, which range

from an old Consew industrial sewing machine for sewing the seams to a ratchet and socket wrench for tightening the joints, are wielded with skill and precision. But creating art isn't the most satisfying part of her work. Bringing pleasure to people is.

"I love the people I work with," McDowell said. "My husband once told me he likes to go with me when I deliver bears. He said, 'You deliver smiles.' It's very satisfying, gratifying ... to see someone's face light up when they see Grandma's coat turned into a teddy bear to enjoy."



*Jolene Philo, who says she wishes Karla McDowell could attend her family's Christmas celebration to see the great-grandchildren of her Grandma Fern smile as they receive their bears, lives and writes in Boone. She can be reached at jolenephilo@mac.com.*



Grandma Fern models her new Alaskan seal coat in the 1940s.

The old coat shows its age by July 2007.



Photo by and contributed by Jolene Philo

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**Bear making facts:**

- Karla McDowell makes bears in three sizes: 10, 15 and 18 inches.
- Each bear takes four to five hours to make.
- Karla McDowell makes about 300 bears a year, about five or six per week.
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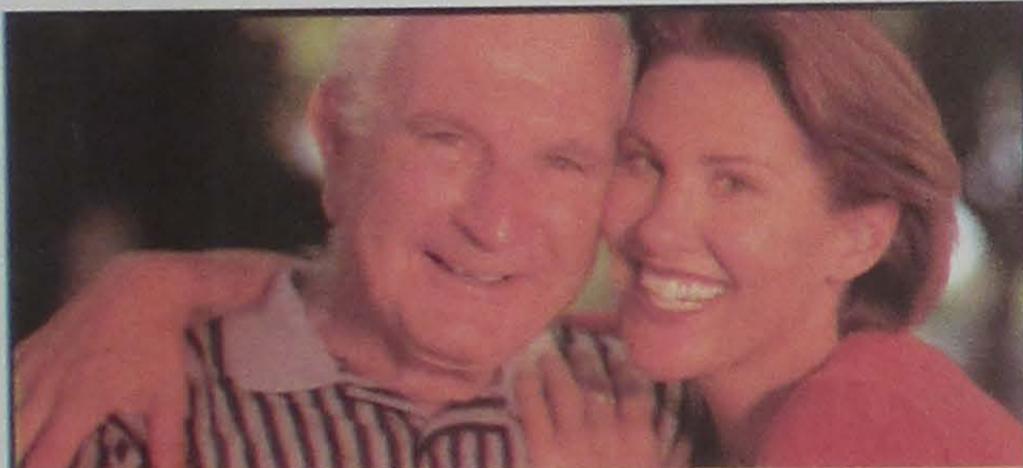
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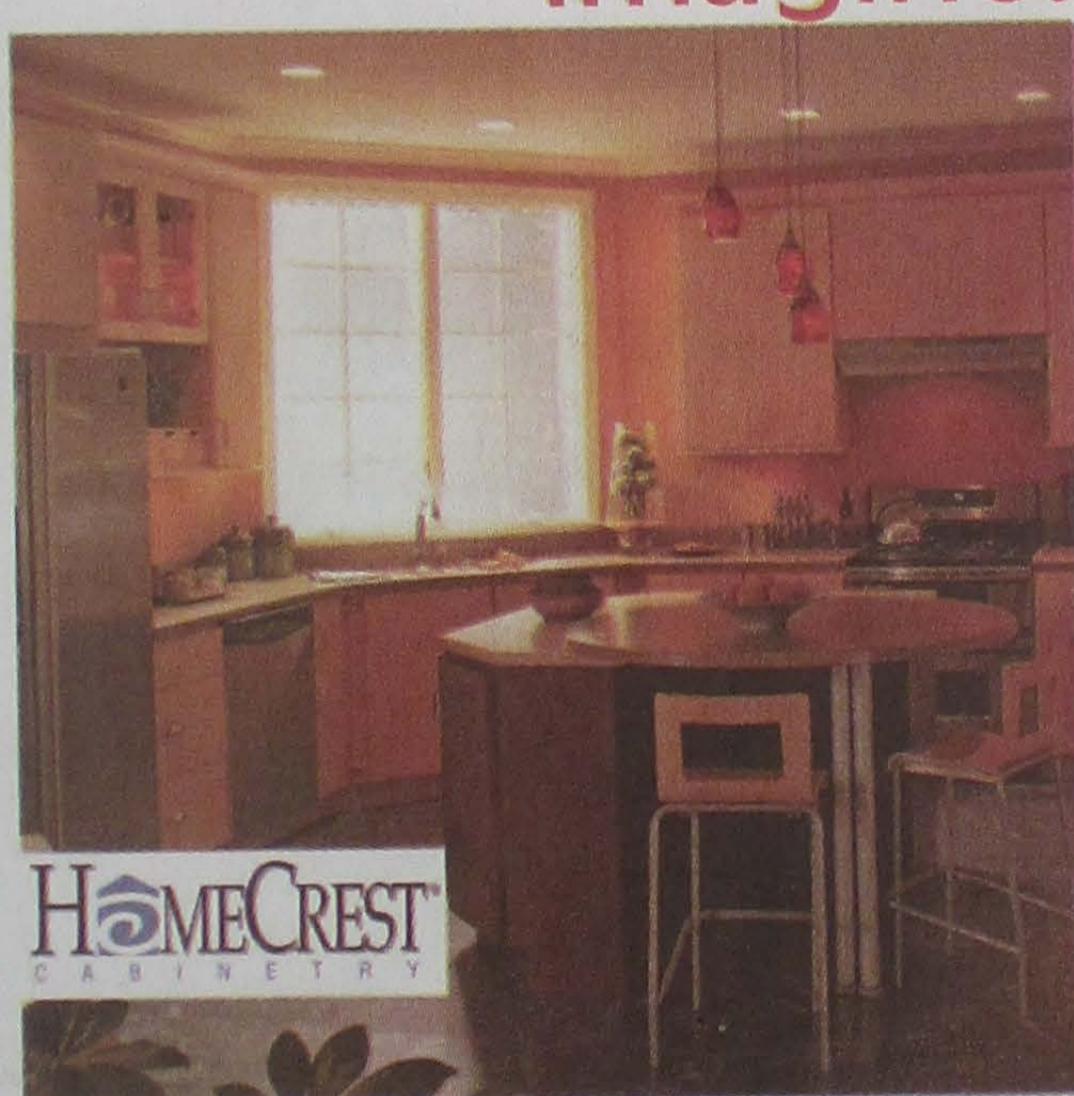


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## MEET A faceted woman

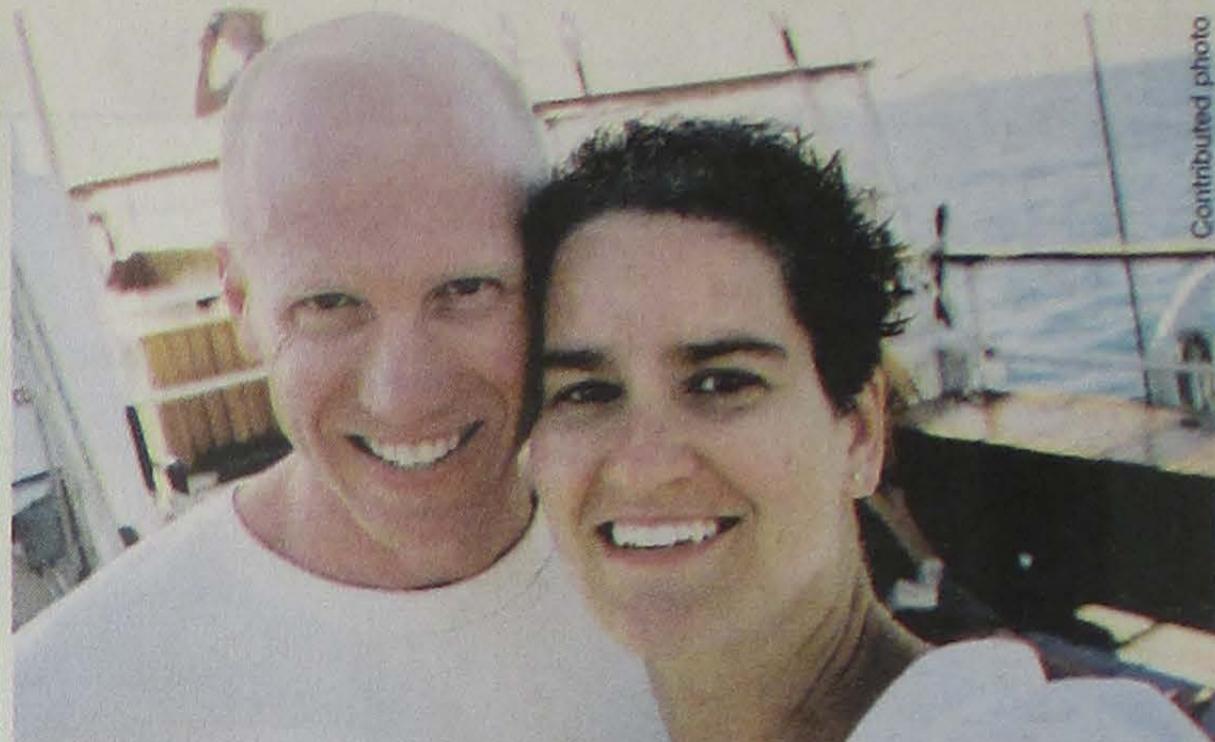


Experimenting in the kitchen is something that Ginger Johnson enjoys doing.

Contributed photo



Ginger and her sister hunting with the family dog.



Contributed photo

One adventure that Ginger Johnson and husband Larry Chase, left, have embarked on together is sailing near Granada.

### Ginger Johnson

**Age:** 39 | **Husband:** Larry Chase | **Entrepreneur – latest concept is** ginger root, a way to foster the eating experience with dinner parties, lunch gatherings, cook to hire | **Loves good sushi | Motto is,** "If you're not having fun, get out."

**What would you do with \$1,000 to spend on yourself?** I'd invest part of it, and then buy some music or shoes.

**What makes you happy?** Life, my fine husband and goofy dog, good health, good food and drink, art, cooking and entertaining, fresh air, snow and mountains, music and dancing with my husband.

**Your best tip to look and feel great:** Get lots of sleep, stay engaged, spend time with valued people, eat healthy, smile!

**Your wardrobe staple:** Diamond studs, white shirts, cowgirl boots.

**How do you reward yourself?** More time to read or to sleep in.

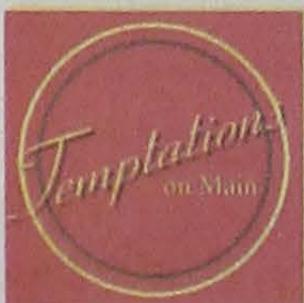
**I crave:** Engaging conversations with amazing people.

**How do you give back to your community?** I'm a Rotary member (Ames morning club), and I am involved in sheriff's citizens academy this fall.

**My idea of a nightmare job:** No future or variety, or working with negative people.

**What financial advice would you give other people?** Start saving now (if you haven't yet) – start with \$10 a week if that's all you can afford. Watch your food habits – it's much costlier to eat out or buy "handy" packs, and the waste is financial and environmental. Read, read, read, and ask questions!

**My simplest pleasure:** Doing something good for the Earth (like composting, or avoiding herbicides and pesticides).



*Holiday gift ideas for all tastes*

**What is your favorite kind of chocolate?**

Ginger Johnson: Dark chocolate with cold milk

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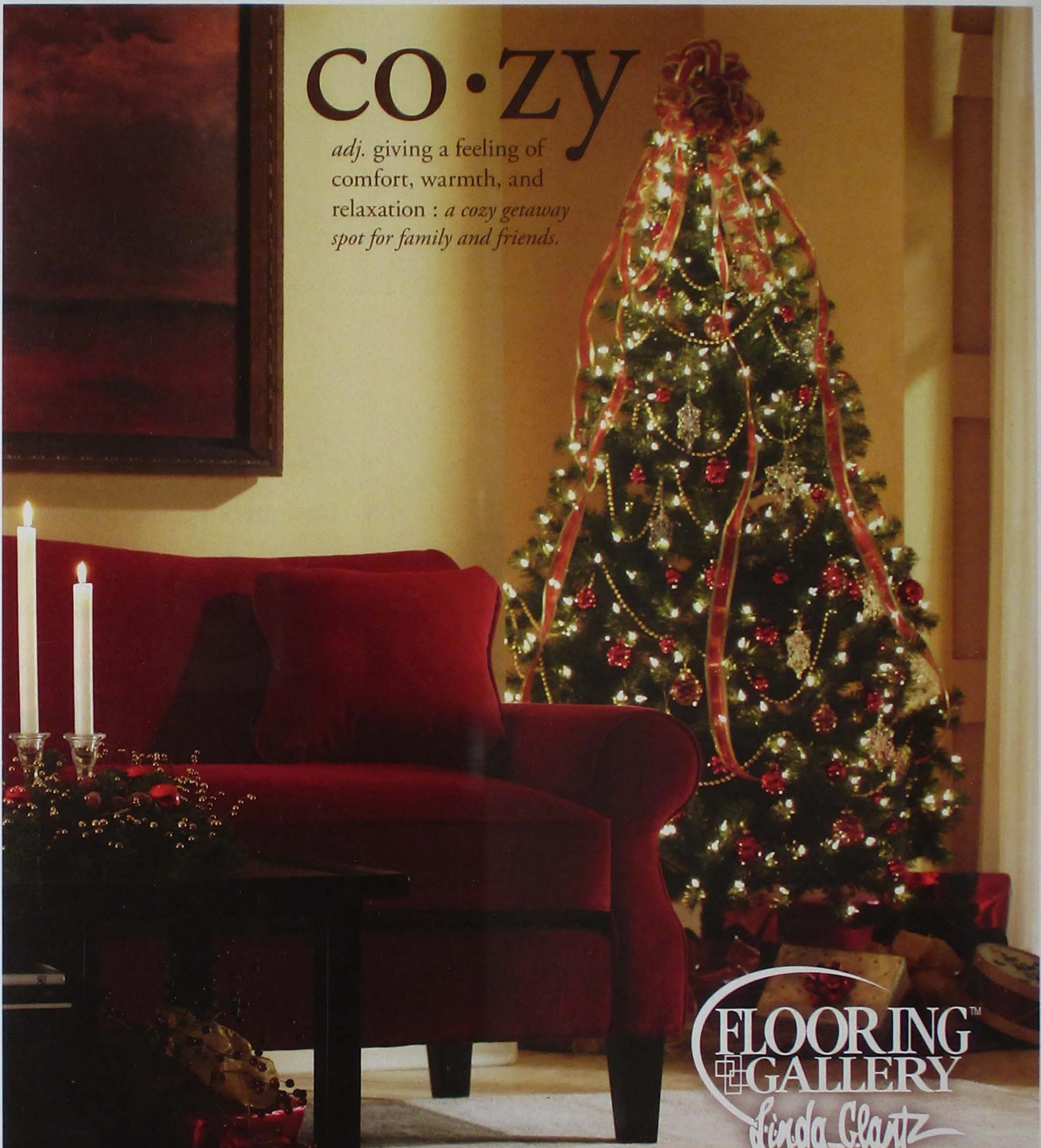
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